

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



Director, Office of Legislative Liaison

16 November 1984

NOTE TO: DCI

Congressional Oversight Improvement

- o I don't think you saw this brief effort at positivism that I sent to Rob Simmons and Tom Latimer last August.
- o There might be something in the attached you could incorporate thematically in the upcoming hearing on the Manual - or some other forum.
- o Ed and I have relaunched an informal dialogue with the oversight staffs on ways to improve things.



STAT

Charles A. Briggs

N.B. John, Jim and others have seen this.



L-272

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

21 August 1984

Mr. Robert R. Simmons  
Staff Director  
Select Committee on  
Intelligence  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear *Rob* ~~Bob~~:

After a short experience with what I've inherited, I pulled the enclosed statement together in an effort to articulate the two-way nature of the oversight process.

I'd like to have it (or something like it) distributed in-house here to educate, inform, guide and influence Agency troops. I would also hope that it might present a positive tone for our joint efforts at improved professional relations.

I welcome your comments.

Sincerely,

A rectangular box redacting the signature of Charles A. Briggs.

Charles A. Briggs  
Director, Office of Legislative Liaison

Enclosure

Distribution:

Orig - Addressee w/encl  
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1 - OLL Chron w/o/encl  
D/OLL:CABriggs;jms (21 Aug 84)

STAT

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

21 August 1984

Mr. Thomas K. Latimer  
Staff Director  
Permanent Select Committee  
on Intelligence  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Tom:

After a short experience with what I've inherited, I pulled the enclosed statement together in an effort to articulate the two-way nature of the oversight process.

I'd like to have it (or something like it) distributed in-house here to educate, inform, guide and influence Agency troops. I would also hope that it might present a positive tone for our joint efforts at improved professional relations.

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Director, Office of Legislative Liaison

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## Congressional Oversight - Quid Pro Quo

### I. CIA Quid

- o Our Congressional Oversight Committees have a legitimate right to accurate and timely information about the Agency including the DO. It is in our interest to provide that information so that any differences with Congress focus on substance rather than on whether we have told them all we should have and at an appropriate time.
- o We must, of course, protect sources and methods, but we should not use that excuse to conceal information. Our objective with Congress is not to tell them as little as possible but rather to tell them as much as possible without endangering operations. It behooves us to provide information with grace and alacrity, not grudgingly and cautiously.
- o We should address the issues, whether or not the specific questions asked are correctly framed to get at them.
- o Exaggeration, evasion and misdirection on minor issues undermine our credibility with Congress on all issues.
- o We must be absolutely neutral, politically, with and between Committees and Members of Congress.
- o We should understand and respect the Congressional function and recognize the responsibilities that rest on Members and Committees.

### II. Congressional Quo

- o The Congressional Oversight Committees must make unusual efforts to perform their role in a bipartisan and secure manner to ensure the credibility and professional respect necessary for the process to work.
- o Oversight Committee staff self-discipline is required to avoid overlapping, repetitive and encyclopedic questions which reduce the credibility of the oversight process, tend to erode security, and have great manpower impact on analysts and operators.
- o Reasonableness must prevail to prevent oversight from degenerating into micromanagement.
- o A positive goal of oversight, balancing the watchdog role, is that of buffer and defender of a strong U.S. intelligence capability, especially within Congress but also in assuring the public.
- o Oversight Committee Members and staff should understand and respect the intelligence and covert action functions and recognize the responsibilities that rest on the personnel who direct these activities at home and abroad.